



OUR TOWN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

DECEMBER 2021



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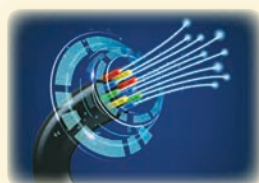
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to Town



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Art of
Living
History



DATA SPEED BY THE NUMBERS

Megabits per second,
download/upload

SPEED OF 1990S
56K MODEM

.056/.056

SPEED OF
OLDER AT&T DSL

7/1

SPEED OF AT&T
U-VERSE

50/10

AVERAGE COMCAST
XFINITY

187/20

LAHCF SPEEDS
STANDARD INSTALL

940/940

LAHF 10 GIG CONNECT

**9,500/
9,500**



Making the High-Speed Connection

Reliable and consistent, high-speed Internet service at our homes is probably the most valuable connected service today other than power. We can function without water or other services for several hours; however, when the primary internet service goes down or is impossibly slow, our daily connected lives for work, school, and social communications are immediately impacted. In Los Altos Hills, many residents are still not served with affordable internet options. Most residents have some reasonable internet options, but very few are at the quality and speed of Fiber Optic internet service to the home. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.]



What is the history of LAHCF?

LAHCF, like most organizations and projects, evolved from a series of events, each providing the luck and energy to move the project forward. The origins of LAHCF started with the work of the Town's Emerging Technology Ad Hoc Committee (ETC) formed in 2017 by



former Town Council member Michelle Wu. This committee prepared and sent a

Request For Information (RFI) to potential Internet Services providers, including Comcast, AT&T, Verizon, Sonic, and others, to see if any provider could offer a Gigabit broadband solution for Los Altos Hills. One company that responded with a viable solution was Next Level Networks (Next Level) of Sunnyvale, California.

Next Level offered a business model for town residents to create a mutual benefit corporation — a not-for-profit organization that residents would own and through which they would operate their own fiber-optic network. Next Level would install the fiber and provide the network configuration, maintenance, and support as the selected professional services provider for the mutual benefit corporation. In 2018, the ETC disbanded, but the resident's interest in finding a gigabit broadband solution continued, so residents independently continued the conversation with Next Level, and formed LAHCF.

In 2019, LAHCF was incorporated in the state of California as a mutual benefit not-for-profit corporation. The first pilot project on Fremont Pines Lane was completed on November 4, 2019, offering the opportunity for 1-10 Gigabit fiber service to homes in Los Altos Hills. In the past two years, several neighborhoods have been added to the network. As an interim service, in some cases, the service uses point-to-point radio to

In June 2021, LAHCF was mentioned in the Congressional record and specially recognized by Representative Anna Eshoo of California's 18th Congressional district as a model community broadband project to emulate.

connect "fiber islands" to an existing fiber connection. Once the optic fiber is installed underground in the road and utility rights of way, there will be a direct connection. The point-to-point radio service has allowed several neighborhoods to come online quickly. This model for bringing high-speed broadband to communities has caught the attention of many elected officials, and many frustrated homeowners throughout the United States. In June 2021, LAHCF was mentioned in the Congressional record and specially recognized by Representative Anna Eshoo of California's 18th Congressional district as a model community broadband project to emulate. One of the bills that Congresswoman Eshoo has been working on is H.R. 1631 – The Community Broadband Act of 2021.

In August 2021, the Town of Los Altos Hills conducted a town-wide study session to inform residents and council members about the LAHCF project. At that meeting, the Town Council voted 5-0 to support a Master Access agreement between LAHCF and the Town that will grant LAHCF access to the public rights of way to install fiber. LAHCF has many projects funded and ready to launch now that the master access agreement is

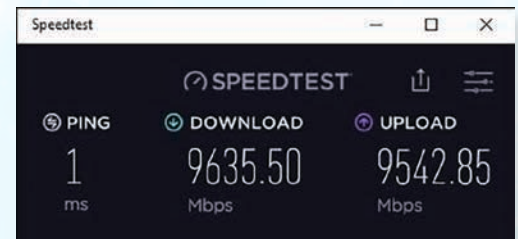
signed. Many more projects are in various stages of development all over town, all being driven by passionate LAHCF neighborhood champions connecting with their neighbors and moving this project forward.

How does LAHCF differ from current Internet Service Providers?

For the most part, internet service in town is provided

by AT&T and Comcast. These corporations have proven difficult to work with for many town residents. LAHCF is a member/resident-owned and operated fiber-optic network. It is governed by an elected board from its subscribing members, like a Homeowners Association. LAHCF is not a municipal build that is being funded or guided by Los Altos Hills government. Each neighborhood funds its own network. LAHCF does not use town tax dollars to fund any installations or services.

LAHCF offers fiber internet to the home. Fiber is by far the best technology to deliver quality, very high-speed Internet today. To enjoy the high-speed Internet that runs all over the world with fiber, one must install fiber the last mile to each home — and LAHCF does exactly that. AT&T uses a combination of fiber and 100-year-old twisted telephone copper pairs technology to deliver its current U-Verse service. Comcast delivers internet via a 1970's cable TV thick cable infrastructure. Neither technology can compete with the speed provided by fiber-optic network service to each home. Since LAHCF is a not-for-profit mutual benefit corporation, the price for services is anticipated to drop with more subscribers. Dependability should also increase, since the fiber is optimized to deliver only internet data. Cable TV and telephone service may still require separate subscriptions.

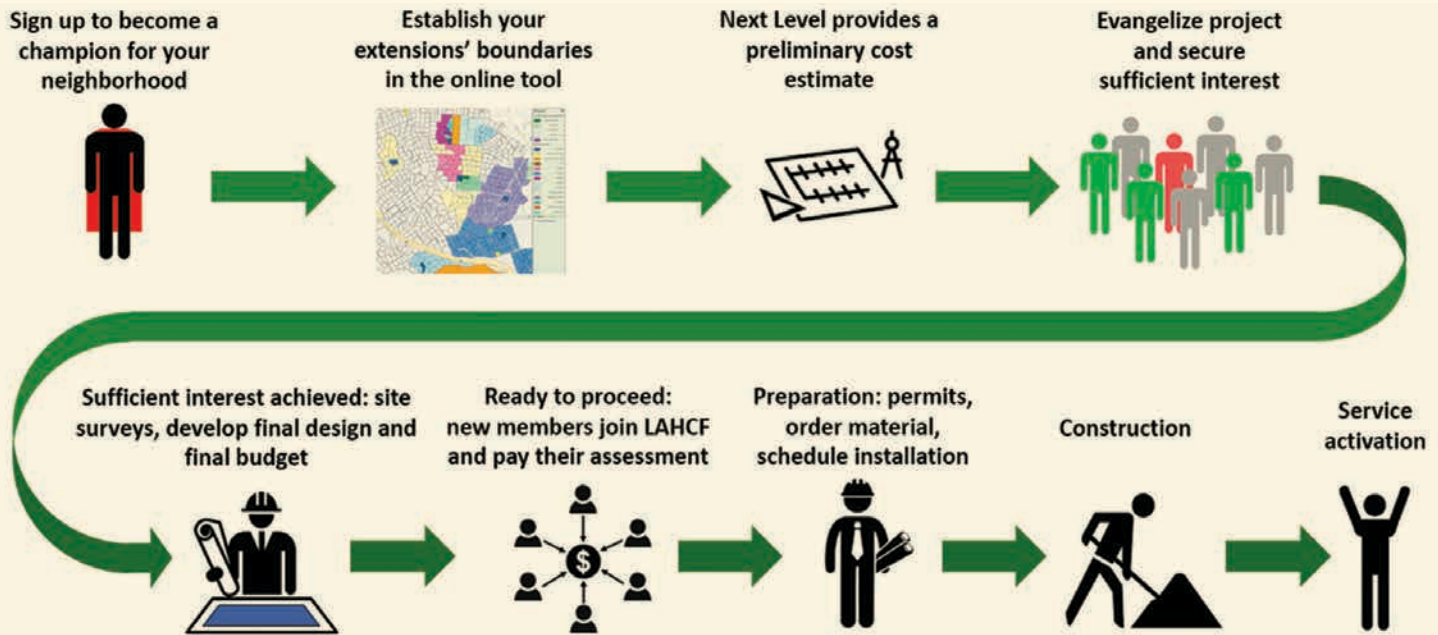


What kinds of speeds and services will LAHCF offer?

LAHCF offers 1 gigabit to 10 gigabit (10,000 megabits/sec) service (both upload and downloads speeds are similar). At present the default install is 1 gigabit up/down due to the pricing of consumer modems, but users can connect with 10-gigabit service if they provide their own modem and router equipment. The entire LAHCF network is 10 gigabit-enabled and the monthly cost is the same for a 1 or 10 Gigabit connection.



ORGANIZING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



When will it be available?

About 35 properties in LAHCF are currently connected as subscribers. LAHCF is in the process of final designs and permitting for another 50-100 homes. LAHCF has funding to provide service for another 150-200 homes beyond that, and many more projects are in the earlier stages of development. A goal of LAHCF is to offer service to any LAH neighborhood in the next two to four years that wish to connect.

LAHCF has no connection to the town's undergrounding projects currently in discussion. The town's power undergrounding project has a 10-50 year horizon for implementation and utilizes different funding sources and schedules.

How does LAHCF able to offer such high speeds without using Comcast or AT&T circuits?

In almost all scenarios, AT&T and Comcast will not resell their dark (unlit or unused) fiber to other organizations. LAHCF was able to find a "middle-mile fiber provider" that will lease its dark fiber. Combining dark fiber circuits, a leased fiber connection is made from Los Altos Hills over 40 kilometers of dark fiber to a data center in Santa Clara, completely bypassing local telecom's last-mile infrastructure. At the data center, LAHCF peers directly into the backbone of the internet with Hurricane Electric. This dark fiber and direct internet peering give LAHCF very affordable, very high speed, and almost

unlimited capacity options. LAHCF teams with Next Level to build our community-operated and managed services with a few cabinets and buried fiber optic conduits in town. As long-term homeowners, many are willing to invest in a 20 year+ solution today. Apparently, the legacy providers seem unwilling to take that risk.

How can I get connected?

Where LAHCF installs fiber is based on neighborhood interest. The best way to find out if LAHCF is constructing a project near you is to fill out the "Get Service Form" on the LAHCommunityFiber.org website. This form will be picked up by a LAHCF membership volunteer who will review your address and determine the closest project or recommend that you launch a new neighborhood project. LAHCF already has about 50 neighborhood champions. Contact LAHCF if you want to be a neighborhood champion.

What are the basic installation and monthly service costs?

LAHCF fiber-optic networks are all new and are separate from existing telco infrastructure (i.e., AT&T, PG&E poles, or Comcast). We are building a network entirely underground. It is expensive to build a new network. The ballpark one-time installation costs vary from \$5K to \$10K. The monthly cost for 1-10 Gigabit service is currently \$155/month, but should drop to \$100/month once LAHCF reaches 100 users, and drop

once again to \$60/month once service increases to 300 users.

Why should town residents connect with LAHCF?

Based on conversations with town residents, LAHCF has heard of many reasons to subscribe to this service:

- AT&T DSL and U-Verse are often not meeting the FCC definition of broadband anymore.
- Comcast Internet has reliability issues, latency, and intermittent quality of service (Comcast often freezes on zoom), terrible customer support, and inconsistent pricing.
- Many residents want a backup internet service in case one goes down.
- Getting a high-speed fiber connection to the home can significantly increase the resale value.

How can I contact LAHCF and get more information?

Please visit the LAHCF website contact page: www.lahcommunityfiber.org. You can email or call for more information. The website also has answers to frequently asked questions and information about neighborhood champions and how to become one. It is recommended that anyone wishing to stay informed sign up for the LAHCF newsletter from the website newsletter link.

Scott Vanderlip is a long-time resident and town volunteer. Projects vary from the Pathways Run to now helping make Los Altos Hills the fastest residential broadband community in America.



Meet the New City Manager

On October 15, 2021, the City Council announced the appointment of Peter Pirnejad to serve as City Manager for Los Altos Hills. Pirnejad holds a Doctorate and Masters in Policy, Planning, and Development from the University of Southern California. He has extensive government experience having served in various leadership roles in Foster City, Napa, Palo Alto, and Daly City. Pirnejad also worked in the private sector, as senior director at Oracle. Pirnejad's first day as City Manager was October 25, 2021. In this interview with *Our Town*, Pirnejad reflects on his professional and academic journey, insights, interests, and stewardship of Los Altos Hills in the forthcoming years.

For residents not familiar with city government, what are the specific responsibilities of a City Manager?

The City Manager (CM) is hired and directed by the five members of the Council. My main job is to oversee the daily operations of the town in an ethical, efficient, and transparent manner. My position is nonpartisan and nonpolitical. Much like executives who direct private-sector corporations, professional local government managers provide leadership, vision, and a focus that results in a better community.

With the help of my highly skilled and professional team of local government experts, we manage the financial and human resources, oversee the delivery of essential community services, oversee town planning and building codes, oversee and maintain the town's capital assets, oversee the creation and delivery of parks and

recreation services, work with neighboring agencies and districts to ensure other services such as library services are operational, oversee the contract services provided by police and fire, use performance metrics to drive continuous improvement, all while committing to the highest level of ethical and professional standards.

In addition to the operations of the town, the CM works closely with the entire city council and staff to develop sound approaches to community challenges by bringing together resources that produce results that matter. In addition, the CM helps the governing body develop a long-term vision for the community that provides a framework for policy development and goal setting. The CM also encourages inclusion and consensus-building among diverse interests

(including those of the elected officials, the citizens, and interest groups) by focusing on the needs of the entire community. This is done by promoting equity and fairness by ensuring that services are fairly distributed and financially responsible.

Tell us about the current staff you manage.

The management staff includes the Administrative Services Department which is in charge of finance and HR. The Public Works director is in charge of maintaining, expanding, and operating all the assets under our control such as sewer distribution system, streets, signs, and facilities such as the Corporate Yard and Civic Center. The Planning Director has been selected and started on November 18, 2021. The Planning Director is in charge of planning/zoning, building plan check and inspection, and code enforcement. In addition, I manage the City Clerk, the Parks and Recreation Department, and special projects. The town also contracts for sheriff, fire, library and other municipal services.

What do you enjoy most about your role as a City Manager?

What I enjoy most is working side by side with professional administrators to serve the needs of the community's challenges today and set policies under the council that addresses challenges of the future. Community engage-

ment and involvement is my passion. Although the process can be difficult and lengthy, the results should reflect the interest of the whole and bring the community closer together.

What is the set of beliefs or philosophy that guides your decision-making as a City Manager?

I believe in a transparent and equitable form of government that relies on balancing the needs of the community with the financial realities of their adopted budget and the operational capacity of the city staff.

What attracted you to work for the Town of Los Altos Hills?

For me it was about serving a town that seeks to protect and preserve what I enjoy recreationally and appreciate professionally. Los Altos Hills offers a quality of life with its rolling hills, sprawling trail system, and generous estates that balance nature and manicured real-estate. As an urban planner I appreciate the unique balance of natural and built environments. As an outdoor enthusiast it is one of the few places where one can escape the hectic pace of the Silicon Valley to enjoy a rigorous climb with breathtaking views.

What aspects of the town intrigue you the most?

The town has a resident base that has both experience and knowledge which can help the town advance Council priorities. A city rarely has such a highly qualified and capable resident base in such a wide range of expertise ranging from technology, open space, environmental sustainability, finance, and so much more. I am interested to explore how staff can work together with the committee groups to honor their contribution and leverage their expertise all to advance the city's priorities.

Some of your key skills are modernizing government operations and civic-engagement, community-building, and leading an organization. What are some innovations that can be implemented soon?

As I understand the council's goals and priorities, I intend to use my experience and network in the GovTech space to find solutions that can quickly and effectively advance those

goals. I wouldn't suggest solutions until I understand the council and community's priorities and staff capacity. I am also sensitive to the need to layer technology solutions on processes that are ready to be automated. We don't want to automate a process that needs improvement. That being said, some solutions can advance community engagement that are lightweight and rely less on existing systems such as statistically valid polling systems. I think in the coming months, as I understand the staff capacity and the council's priorities, I will be coming to the Council with recommendations on how to advance goals and improve service.

How will you manage the balance of expediting action with citizen input on crucial decisions?

We will seek input when the decision is not clear. We will be decisive when it is. We will always communicate. We hope you do the same.

What strategies will you use to bring opposing views to the table to build consensus?

Democracy works best when everything is visible, people come equipped with all the facts and ready to work toward a resolution that is in the interest of the collective whole. The key to consensus is transparency. First comes the collection and sharing of facts and understanding. Next comes organized and balanced collaboration and conversation. Next comes respectful and deliberation and negotiations, then comes decision and compromise. And finally comes celebration and connection.

We need to trust the process and come prepared to hear both sides and ready to compromise.

How do you see your role as City Manager to promote the town's committee members' talents and efforts?

The number of engaged and informed residents is an asset we should both celebrate and leverage. As your City Manager, I would encourage our committees to work with staff to develop their own goals and ensure they are in alignment with those of

the City Council. They should present their goals and accomplishments to the council annually. The committees should be advisory to the council and seek to work with staff to advance the town's goals. Committee recommendations should be taken under advisement by both the staff and the council. As an extension of staff, the committees can be an essential asset to both the Council and staff as we work together to improve the town one day at a time.

Tell us about your formative early years and influences.

I grew up in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles in a home of immigrant parents who came to this country with nothing more than hopes, dreams, and a strong work ethic. I witnessed first-hand how hard work and commitment can lead to great success without having to compromise your values.

Family and community was our highest priority, so community became something I cherished from an early age. I believe it was those early years that gave me an appreciation of bringing people together. Since then, I have always been a community builder joining and participating in groups that focus on bringing people together and celebrating our differences and enriching each other's lives.

When did you get interested in Environmental Studies and Geography. How did those interests influence your career?

It was in high school, at Monroe High School (Sepulveda), when I took my field trip to Yosemite and developed a deep appreciation for the environment. That, coupled with my commitment to community, naturally lead to a double major in Environmental Studies and the Social Geography. It was in classes that involved a field trip to places like the Mojave, Mammoth, Devil's Post piles, and other parks with large groups of people that sparked my interest. The joy of celebrating community and environment together helped me understand that I wanted to help the environment and people. This passion led me into the field of urban planning and eventually city management.

Soon after you graduated from UCSB, you worked as a planning assistant for

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Westlake Village, just a bit larger than our town. You mention that “it was the best decision of my life.” Elaborate on that.

Westlake Village [a city in Los Angeles County, just south of Thousand Oaks] was a small, highly engaged community of well-educated, successful professionals in all walks of life that had a passion for community, relationships, and quality of life. As the senior planner, I was a valued partner to the community and council and felt like an integral part of the staff. I knew that my contributions mattered, and it made a difference. The contract City model, such as Westlake and Los Altos Hills, continues to be a very successful model for the delivery of efficient and effective governance. The idea that local government can adapt and adjust to the evolving needs of their community helped me succeed throughout my career. In fact, a large part of my dissertation focused on collaborative governance which leverages those lessons of public, private, non-profit, and academic partnerships that I learned in Westlake Village. I bring that philosophy to Los Altos Hills with a commitment to help advance our evolving priorities.

You then worked for several cities in the state (Selma, Lodi, Daly City, Palo Alto, and Napa) before your graduate work. These cities are very different. Could you share some of the key lessons learned while in each of these? What were some of the challenges that these cities faced that also face this town.

The cities I worked for were vastly different in make-up, socioeconomics, demographics, geography, as well as politics. I wanted to diversify my experience to help me understand how to work in a variety of environments and a range of constituents. The lesson I learned is that as a public servant, my job is to solve problems while staying neutral and apolitical. A large part of local government is coming together to solve problems together. In the process, it is important to bring everyone to the table and help elevate everyone's voice. The greater the variety of opinions and backgrounds,

“History shapes our present and influences our future. For Los Altos Hills, many believe that the Green Sheets were the community’s Federalist Papers that helped shape and preserve what people love about this town.”

the better the ultimate decision. What I learned in every city, and I would call my greatest strength is building community. The challenges are that this process can be slow and messy when bringing everyone along in the decision-making process.

All of these cities have mixed-use development. Los Altos Hills, in contrast, is essentially a bedroom community. From a city management point of view, what are the advantages and disadvantages of that?

Los Altos Hills is not a traditional bedroom community. It is adjacent to major employers, downtowns, universities, and other amenities that meet the needs of the community without the typically related impacts such as crime, parking, and traffic. The robust property tax base allows us to offer more traditional community services that are reserved to those communities with a sales tax and transit occupancy tax base. Some City Managers might want the diversity of challenges that come with a mixed-use urbanized community. As for me, Los Altos Hills is the perfect community that brings the perfect balance of complex issues and engaged citizenry.

Tell us about the factors that inspired you to pursue graduate education. What were some of the significant skills and knowledge you gained?

I have always been an academic professional that enjoyed thinking

deeply about “tricky” problems. These are problems that are hard to define, measure, solve, and track. Academia helps reinforce the fundamentals and helps broaden your mind to approach challenges with a fresh perspective. My graduate work helped me focus more deeply on public administration and the technical skills I would need to solve tricky problems. My doctorate led me to original research that helped me advance my profession by teaching and publishing original work.

In today's world where challenges are less right or wrong and more about tradeoffs, it is important that our leaders come equipped with a rich toolbox of skills and abilities and a willingness to collaborate with others ready to tackle new and challenging problems. Advanced academic training has helped me both broaden my mind and expand my perspective.

Who were some of your key mentors during that time? How did they help form your understanding of your profession?

Some of my key mentors were seasoned and accomplished City Managers, college professors, and thought leaders that have helped me think more deeply and ask more probing questions about the challenges that face cities and those that administer them. They challenged my thinking and offered advice that can only come from years of experience. Their perspective on the profession and perception of those navigating it is unmatched.

In 2018 you left government for the private sector, working for the Oracle Public Sector Community Development. Please elaborate on that experience and compare and contrast that with your government experience.

My private sector tour of duty at Oracle was a crash course in multi-national Big-Tech marketing, business development, and strategy. It taught me about a whole new world from a perspective very few people in my profession get to witness first-hand. Learning how to take a product from concept to delivery, research and

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develop market opportunities and develop leads in a corporation as vast as Oracle was life-changing. I have a tremendous amount of respect for these people that are masters of their craft. I learned about the power of marketing and the role it can play to help positively advance local government. There were many transferable skills related to corporate can-do attitude as well as the network in the Government Technology comes in very helpful.

In front of the National Archives of the United States, is a statue etched with a quote from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. "What is past is prologue." Why is the history of Los Altos Hills important now and in its future?

History shapes our present and influences our future. For Los Altos Hills, many believe that the Green Sheets [sheets of light green paper that listed the reasons why the town should be incorporated to retain its rural character; see the March 2016 issue of *Our Town* to learn more] were the community's Federalist Papers that helped shape and preserve what people love about this town. The town's ability to preserve the semi-rural natural beauty and gracious lot sizes coupled with the robust network of trails, views, rolling hills, and proximity to the best Silicon Valley has to offer, makes Los Altos Hills such a desirable place to live.

In terms of your career and work, where do you find inspiration?

I find inspiration from the people that commit their entire careers and energy to public service. These elected, appointed, and professionals that commit to the practice of democracy are magical. The commitment of "others before self" is something to celebrate and find inspiration from.

What is your favorite quotation that inspires you or reflects your personal philosophy?

"What is the city but the people." from William Shakespeare's play, *Coriolanus* (Act 3, Scene 1).

"In today's world where challenges are less right or wrong and more about tradeoffs, it is important that our leaders come equipped with a rich toolbox of skills and abilities and a willingness to collaborate with others ready to tackle new and challenging problems."

If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently? What would you do the same?

What would I do differently is that I would have traveled more as a young man in my twenties. What would I do the same is my marriage and family life. My wife and my kids are my greatest treasure. They are my world, and I wouldn't change them for it. Marrying her and our three boys are the best part of my life.

Tell us about your family. What are some of your favorite activities/pastimes?

I am married to my wife, Rozalin, of 21 years, and we have three boys. I have an 8-year gap between number two and three and so with the first two, life was on the go. It was all about backpacking, bike rides, and endless adventures. With my youngest son, it is about spending time at the park, reading, watching him take on the world while I cheer him on.

With all three we spend lots of time in our community parks, Cuesta Park and Bubb Park, and our local elementary school, Benjamin Bubb.

What are some of your favorite books? What are you reading now?

I love to be inspired. My favorite book is one that I just finished: *A Promised Land* by Barack Obama. Another favorite book is *For the Love of Cities* by Peter Kageyama.

What was the best advice you ever received?

Early in my career one of my mentors saw how eager I was to get things done and taught me the goal in local government is often as important as the means. His advice was, "Slow down to go fast." Taking the time necessary to get buy-in, develop consensus, and have widespread ownership about a plan is as important as the successful completion.

We have many young people living in town. What career advice would you give to them?

Do what you love; study, work hard, become great at it, and everything else will follow.

What personal advice would you give?

Get up faster than you fall down. Never take anything for granted. Live like today's your last day, and save like it isn't.

When you are not at work, what are your favorite hobbies/activities?

I ride my bikes. One is a 2017 Specialized Tarmac S-Works SL6 and the other is a 2020 Specialized Tarmac S-Works SL7. Cycling is a multi-dimensional exercise that requires balance, agility, speed, strength, and stamina. I love the challenge of climbing long hills like Page Mill, Hamilton, or Umunhum and the adrenaline-filled bliss of descending East and West 84.

Which is your favorite trail to hike or road to ride in town?

My favorite ride is Burke, to Chaplin, to Robleda, up Elena Road, up Taaffe Road, Altamont Road, down Page Mill, to Arastradero Road, to Purissima, back to Robleda, and then to Burke.

Do you plan on enjoying the beautiful local trails?

I hope to enjoy some trails with residents. I would be open to anyone who wants to show me their favorite trail. I'll bring my hiking shoes.



BUSY AS A

BEE

In keeping with the town's rural zoning of RA (Residential, Agriculture), backyard beekeeping is a favorite hobby for many residents in town. This article will lay out some best practices and methods to get you into beekeeping successfully.

First, beekeeping is legal in Los Altos Hills. Beekeeping ordinances are controlled at the individual city level and there is no real limit to the number of hives. Other cities on the peninsula limit the number of hives or prohibit beekeeping entirely.

There are many reasons to keep and manage bees in hives, but certainly, most do it for the honey that you can harvest. Others may keep bees to dramatically increase pollination in their gardens and neighborhood. Others may just wish to help bees to multiply by offering them a safe haven. If you take up the hobby of beekeeping, you will certainly understand more about the bee's life cycles and the unique whole bee colony ecosystem.

Beekeeping can be enjoyed by adults and kids alike. The only real concern might be for those that are very sensitive to bee stings. A properly worn bee protection suit will prevent most bee stings, but all beekeepers

typically build a high tolerance for stings over the years. Beekeeping does not require a large time commitment. For a small number of hives, the time to manage your bees might be slightly more than tropical fish — maybe 20-30 hours per year.

Beekeeping Equipment

Getting started is fairly easy to do by purchasing a basic beekeeping kit. This includes protection equipment of a proper bee suit with veil, gloves, and smoker, as well as some basic hive tools. Additionally, you need to purchase a full hive or two. A single hive and personal equipment will cost about \$600. The two major online sources for beekeeping equipment are Dadant or Mannlake. Some local stores that sell backyard chicken equipment also sell some beekeeping supplies.

Bees need to be purchased separately. Bees are typically only available for purchase to place into your hives during April and May and it is best to pre-order bees a few months before. A single starter package of bees can cost around \$125 for a box (about the size of a shoebox) that contains about 7,000 bees and a queen. Or you can purchase a nuc (short for "nucleus"), a miniature hive that comes with bees that are established on five frames ready to insert into your hive for about \$200.

If you want to get into beekeeping, you need to decide during the early winter months and purchase your equipment, hives, and pre-order your bees to arrive in April and May. It can be difficult to purchase bees during other months of the year.

Local Guilds

There are many resources to assist in your beekeeping hobby.

Resources include books, YouTube videos, local bee guilds, and local mentors. On the peninsula, we have access to two excellent beekeeping hobbyist guilds organized for each county. Santa Clara County offers the Santa Clara Bee Guild and San Mateo offers the San Mateo Bee Guild. They typically meet monthly and have several talks, training events, free mentoring, swarm capture groups, and even social events. For a low annual fee, you can join one of

Top: Splitting hives bee keeping class with instructor Kendal Sager in Los Altos Hills holding a frame looking for queen. Bottom: Beekeeping class in Los Altos Hills.



these guilds. San Mateo Guild meets in Redwood City and Santa Clara meets in San Jose. Both guilds offer a wealth of information for new beekeepers. The guild also loans out more expensive equipment to members for honey spinning.

Finding a fellow, local beekeeper to help mentor you for your first set of hives is a great way to get off to a successful and less frustrating beekeeping experience.

Starting with two hives is usually better than one hive since today beekeepers often lose about 50% of their hives annually for various reasons. Thirty years ago, for example, beekeepers would only lose 25% of their hives.

Location of Hives

Locating your hive is important for the health of your bees and also how it interacts with you and your neighbors. The most important requirement for bees is a year-round source of reliable water close to the hives. It should be a very consistent shallow source so the bees won't drown. This water must always be available. A set of small birdbaths with rocks in them to make them shallow with year-round water works well. This will prevent your bees from visiting your neighbor's pools and water fountains. The hives should be located at least six inches off the ground on very solid supports as the hives can grow to hundreds of pounds.

The optimum temperature for a beehive and bees is 95° Fahrenheit. So place the hive in warm sunny locations that capture the early morning light and lots of sunlight if possible.

Hive Management

A beekeeper needs to monitor beehives for potential problems and attempt to correct them quickly. Bees, like any animal, have predators like wasps that will eat them for protein. Bees can also be attacked by larger, stronger swarms from other

hives in a behavior called robbing. They can also get sick with viruses or attacked by other animals, such as mites or ants. Any of these vectors can injure or destroy a hive. Opening up the hives at times to inspect and add additional hive capacity is required for beehives to prosper.

Moving Bees

Bees can't find a hive if you move it a short distance. Always move a hive at least a 1/2 mile or use other methods to make sure they don't try to return to their previous location.

Perks of Beekeeping

If you set up a hive by mid-spring, you might be ready to harvest some honey in early or late summer. To harvest your honey, there are various ways to extract the honey from the frames either by spinning or crushing the honeycombs.

Creating your delicious honey that is local, untainted, raw (unheated) is a great reward for your family and friends. Honey bought in the stores today is often blended, filtered, and

heated (no longer raw) and often adulterated with non-honey ingredients. An analysis by the Honey Authenticity Project, an association of activists and industry members, places the number of fake or adulterated honey at 33%.

Therefore, to obtain the very best honey, buy local or make your own.

Beekeeping also helps individuals understand the vital local ecosystem and how bees, the weather, plants, and water are interdependent and play an important role in pollination. Note that beekeeping can often raise the pollination of fruit trees and other plants by 200-400%. For those who already have backyard chickens, beekeeping is the next best local homesteading activity to begin.

Long-time residents Scott and Tay Vanderlip are beekeepers who offer honey at farm stands in Los Altos Hills.



MAX & THEO'S BEEKEEPING ADVENTURE



Our beekeeping adventure started when our dad's friend, Mur, offered to give us an extra bee colony he was starting.

In preparation for the big day, we checked out a few books at the library and learned all we could about bees and beekeeping. We picked a good, sunny spot in our backyard that was easily accessible so we could check on the bees on our way to school every day.

As we were reading about beekeeping, our favorite fun fact we learned is that honey never goes bad. Humans found ancient honey in Egyptian tombs and it was still edible.

Taking care of a hive is pretty simple: every few weeks we would put on our bee suits and take a peek inside to see how the bees are doing. After the colony got here, it was really exciting to observe them build out their new home. Sometimes the young colony encountered challenges and we would help them out a bit by setting traps for hive beetles or building barriers for ants when it seemed those were bothering them. Once the colony got strong enough they would pretty much fend for themselves.

The best part of beekeeping comes in the summer when we get to harvest our own honey. The first time we harvested, we didn't have a flow hive so we had to do it from the larvae-filled frames. We had to put on our suits and gloves to pull out a few frames. Then we had to wipe off all the bees by using a smoker and a brush. We then took a few honey-filled columns and went to our kitchen to filter the honey. We didn't have a centrifuge, so we used a spatula to scrape off the honey and wax and put it in a filter. It was hard and got a bit messy, but it was fun. In the end, we got eight medium-sized honey

jars from each of the frames.

Once we got the flow-hives, harvesting got much easier because all we had to do was open up a little contraption, turn the crank on the top and let the honey flow into the jars underneath.

Every time we harvest, we always have more than what we need. Some of it we keep for ourselves (it's delicious on bread, crepes, and with tea), some we sell at the farm stand, and some we keep for friends as it makes for a great gift!

Beekeeping is a fun process: you can look at how your bees grow and you can also have delicious honey. We highly recommend it!

Brothers Max and Theo Dupont are aspiring beekeepers living in Los Altos Hills.



TEDx IS COMING TO TOWN



At TEDx events, TEDTalks videos and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group.

With an exciting objective of bringing our community together, while igniting the spirit of educational and knowledgeable ideas worth spreading, the members of Community Relations Committee are thrilled to bring our very first TEDxTalk to Los Altos Hills.

TED is an annual event where some of the world's leading thinkers and doers are invited to share what they are most passionate about. "TED" stands for Technology, Entertainment, and Design — three broad subject areas that are collectively shaping our future. Attendees have called it "the ultimate brain spa" and "a

day-long journey into the future." The diverse audience of CEOs, scientists, creatives, and philanthropists is almost as extraordinary as the speakers, who have included former President Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Frank Gehry, Paul Simon, Sir Richard Branson, Philippe Starck, and Bono.

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, independently organized events that bring people together to share in a TED-like experience. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x=independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program,

but individual TEDx events are self-organized. At TEDx events, TEDTalk videos and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group.

The Community Relations Committee is now working on this 2022 initiative (the date of the event is TBD) and is forming a sub-committee of volunteers to implement and execute the necessary next steps. If you are interested in joining the planning committee or learning more, please email the TEDx Los Altos Hills host, Medha Nicky Rishi, at medharishi1@gmail.com. All ages are welcome.



The Art of Living History

The solo art exhibit “The Art of Living History,” presented by local artist Robert Schick, will be on display at Town Hall from September 2021 to March 2022. The exhibit features a large body of work that records the transformation that Santa Clara Valley went through in front of the artist’s very eyes. During his childhood, Schick relished the Valley’s local landmarks — its orchards, farms, community venues, as well as its indigenous flora and fauna. As a high school artist, Schick planned to capture all these beloved sights and places in a series of paintings upon retirement.

Then in the 1990s, after the “information super-highway” (Internet) was created and Santa Clara Valley was renamed “Silicon Valley,” childhood landmarks that had stood for decades disappeared weekly to make way for corporate campuses and high-density housing. The artist needed to quickly render those landmarks before they disappeared; so, he began this project in the summer of 1997 and started to draw and paint full time on location. A quarter-century later, only a handful of these landmarks remain as living history for future generations.

In previous years, Schick presented his continuously evolving art project to the public in several local exhibits. This current exhibit compiles the most comprehensive collection of paintings and drawings in the artist’s portfolio, depicting the historic beauty of his native land.





TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS
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Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official town newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the town — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is January 6, 2022.**

Printed with soy-based inks. International Paper, the manufacturer of the paper, has earned Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forestry Stewardship Council dual certification.

www.losaltoshills.ca.gov

Our Town

Our Town is published with assistance from the City Clerk, Deborah Padovan, and Town Volunteer Committees.

Editor: Alexander Atkins

Contributing Writers: Max and Theo Dupont, Daniela Friedmann, Medha Nicky Rishi, Scott Vanderlip, Taylor Vanderlip

Photography: Alexander Atkins, Jitze Couperus, Cedric Dupont, Deborah Padovan, Scott Vanderlip

Los Altos Hills City Council

Kavita Tankha, Mayor
George Tyson, Vice Mayor
Stanley Q. Mok
Lisa Schmidt
Linda Swan

City Manager

Peter Pirnejad

CALENDAR



**DEC
18**

Sat., 9:00 am – 2:00 pm
**Brush and Yard Trimmings
Drop Off**

Location: Foothill College
Campus Parking Lot 1.
Residents are encouraged
to dispose of nonhazardous
materials such as pruned
limbs, brush, and branches.
For more information,
please call GreenWaste at
650-947-4994 or check
LAHCFD.org.

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Tue., 2:00 – 3:00 pm
**Virtual Coffee with the
Sheriff**

Join the Santa Clara County
Sheriff's Office and town

staff for Virtual Coffee with
a Sheriff. This is a new
program to enhance public
safety and communication
in the town. Visit [bit.ly/
CoffeeWithTheSheriffLAH](http://bit.ly/CoffeeWithTheSheriffLAH).

Tue., 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Caroling in the Hills

Join your neighbors and
bring the holiday cheer to
the neighborhood. Meet at
Town Hall council chambers
to warm your voices, and
enjoy cookies and warm
beverages before heading
out. For more information
contact Scott Vanderlip
650-948-6455 or via email
email [scott@inet-sciences.
com](mailto:scott@inet-sciences.com).



**JAN
1**

Sat., Time TBD

New Year's Day Hike/Walk

The Pathways Committee
holds an annual New
Year's Day Hike/Walk with
multiple loops of varying
distances. Check the town's
website for updates.

**FEB
2**

Wed., 5:30 – 6:15 pm

**Parks and Rec Virtual
Open House**

Hosted by the Parks and
Recreation Committee.
Virtually meet and greet
your neighbors and learn
about current offerings
in a 15-minute presenta-
tion followed by a Q&A
period. The Parks and Rec
committee wants to hear
from you. For webinar
information email: [Cknopf@
losaltoshills.ca.gov](mailto:Cknopf@losaltoshills.ca.gov).

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Fri., 3:30 – 4:30 pm

The Art of Living History

Free and open to the
public. Art walk and talk
tour of the fine art exhibit
with artist Robert Schick.
Schick will discuss the
inspiration behind his work
and techniques. A Q&A
session will follow. For more
information call 650-941-
7222 or visit [www.robertc-
schick.com](http://www.robertc-schick.com)



**All calendar items subject
to change pending State
and County Guidelines.
Check town website for
current information.**

Calendar events are also
posted on town's website:
www.losaltoshills.ca.gov